

REMARKS

Claim Amendments

The claims have been amended such that former claim 1 has been replaced by the text of former claim 11; claim 11 has consequently been cancelled. Claims 10, 13-15, 18-21 and 25-30 have been cancelled. No new matter has been added.

Rejection of Claims 1-9, 12-14, 18 and 20-30 Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 1-9, 12-14, 18, and 20-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Allen *et al.* (US Patent 6,334,856). Applicants note that the text of claim 11, indicated by the Examiner as allowed, has replaced claim 1 herein. As amended, all pending claims depend directly or indirectly from new claim 1. Accordingly Applicants believe that this amendment has obviated the rejection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection of Claims 10, 18 and 19 Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 10, 18 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Allen *et al.* (US Patent 6,334,856). Claims 10, 18 and 19 have been cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

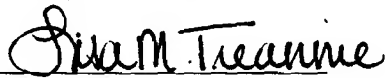
CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Applicant believes no fee is due with this response other than the fees provided for on the accompanying transmittal. However, if an additional fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 50-3655, under Order No. VALT-590-101.

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Respectfully submitted,

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